1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Zaire FO1

[P. 251-A]

ception is the ritual *makata* dance which is held only during the *nkumbi*.

Even in ordinary times, when a hunting band is visiting a village, it may come down to the main meeting place in the evening and dance. The villagers expect it and regard it as one of their forms of entertainment, though they say they consider the Pygmy dance barbaric. The Pygmy definitely fills the role of entertainer and is not infrequently called on by the villagers to dance.

When the two groups meet on both festive and ordinary occasions they keep apart from each other. There is no leisure activity in which they participate together, only a few ritual activities (which are discussed below). The Mbuti camp beside the village, on the edge of the plantation where the forest begins. This physical disposition of the two communities, which seems to be invariable throughout the Ituri, and general Pygmy behavior in the village may well symbolize the contiguous nature of the relationship between the two peoples, as opposed to any close symbiosis such as was alleged by Schebesta.

1: Turnbull E-4. 5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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533
796
881
517

PLATE 38 7

GIRLS' HOOP DANCE, EPULU DISTRICT, CENTRAL ITURI

Dance, together with song, forms the major outlet of artistic expression for the Mbuti. The line between sacred and secular is almost non-existent. The hoop dance is used by girls and women to celebrate the *elima*, or puberty, of one of their number, but it may be seen also as an idle moment in almost any day. Words of accompanying songs are nearly invariably in praise of the forest.

1, /Plate 38 appears on page 309--Analyst/

[P.308]

1: Turnbull E-4,5 (1951-1955) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

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796
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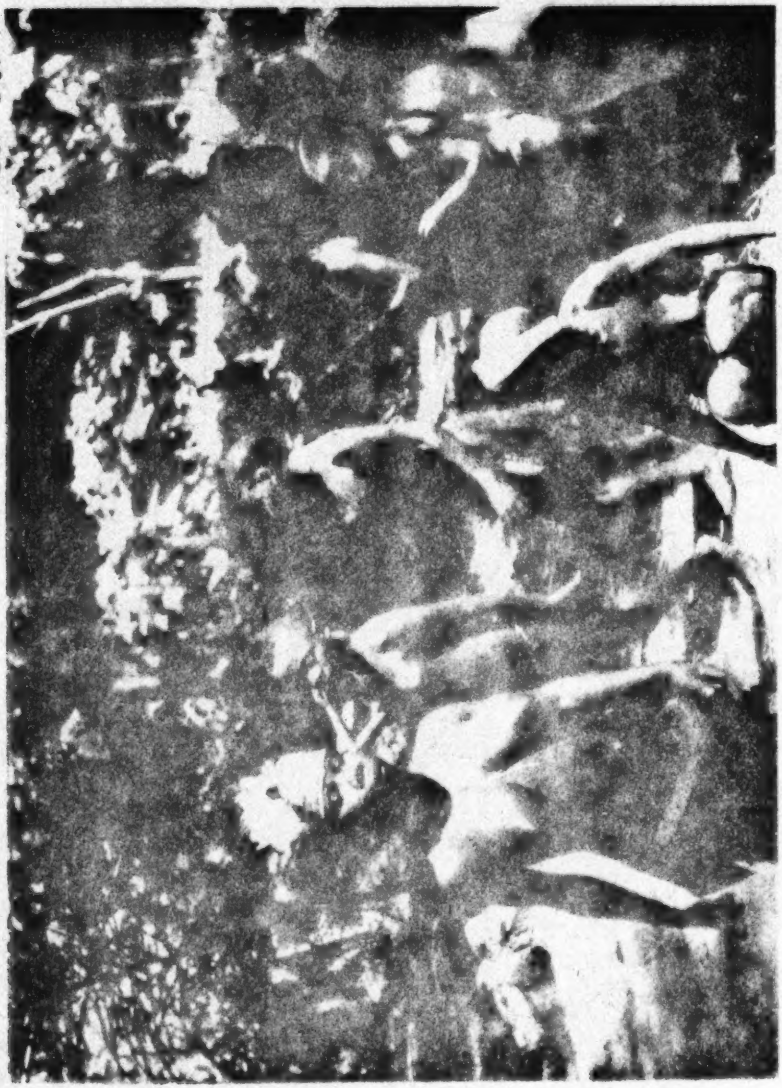

[P309] /Plate 38/
/Caption appears on p.308/

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

ultimate if not immediate control. It is more difficult to see what the Mbuti get out of it, except for certain economic advantages which are meant to be reciprocal. Looking at it briefly from the Mbuti point of view, however, we see that the advantages are perhaps more real than those accruing to the villagers. For the villagers are bound by their own sanctions, and therefore the Mbuti can make demands of his *karé* with reasonable assurance that they will be met. Also, he can now expect a succession of relatively lavish ceremonies to be prepared for him as he goes through life, at the expense of his *karé* and *kpara*. The feasting involved may seem a trivial gain for the Mbuti, but in fact it is one of their major sources of entertainment and relaxation. The *nkumbi* extends the Mbuti's economic and political horizons just as it does those of the villagers, and the Mbuti know how to reap the advantages, just as they know how to avoid most of the disadvantages. This avoidance in fact forms one of the important features of the over-all structure of their society.

One final advantage that should be mentioned, though its importance is perhaps more personal than social, is that only by participation in the *nkumbi*, or its equivalent among tribes with other forms of initiation into manhood, can the Mbuti become a man in the eyes of the villagers. There is a strongly paternalistic attitude held by villagers toward their Mbuti that is resented by the hunters, who consider themselves more manly than the villagers. The *nkumbi* at least offers them an opportunity for proving their manliness to the villagers, and it sometimes develops into a contest between the Mbuti and the village initiates. And only by participation in the *nkumbi* can the Mbuti acquire the right to be addressed as adults, admitted to the adult *baraza*, and accorded other adult privileges when in the village.

ELIMA

The villagers do not attempt to exert supernatural control through the women, as they do through the men. While the Mbuti men have nothing comparable to the *nkumbi* initiation of the villagers, the Mbuti women, in the forest world, do have a recognizable and formal way of acknowledging the puberty of a girl. They give it the same name as the villagers (the Bira call it *elima*, the Lesé *peipa*) and in its outer form it appears roughly similar; the occasion at least is the same,

THE MAKING OF CAMP LELO

For an hour the others lay around the fire, while I was pushed into a corner, and discussed where they would go to hunt the next day and which girls they would flirt with. They poked sleepily at the fire, sending up showers of sparks and filling the hut with smoke. In all the huts around us, families were chatting among themselves in a drowsy way, and occasionally some eavesdropper shouted a suitable comment, bringing a burst of laughter from all the nearby huts. The leaf walls keep out no sound at all, and anything said in an ordinary speaking voice can be heard four or five huts away. But before long the voices got sleepier and sleepier, and finally the only sounds were the chirping of crickets, the soft swishing of the already swollen Lelo, and the quiet falsetto of Makubasi as he sat outside his hut, all alone by a blazing fire. He held his baby son on his lap, and sang a lullaby, half to himself and half to the child. He was still singing when I went to sleep.

The next morning the camp was up at dawn, and before it was properly light there was hardly a soul left about—only old Tungana, sitting where his son Makubasi had sat the night before and like his son singing to the baby on his knee. Kenge said that some of the men had gone hunting early, because they needed a lot of meat to begin the molimo festival for Balekimito and they did not want to start until they had plenty of food. The rest of the men and women were out cutting the leaves and saplings needed to finish building the camp. We went to join them, not far off. The rest of the day we spent making the simple furniture of a Pygmy household.

Sticks lashed together and bound by vine thongs to a frame make one of the most uncomfortable beds in the world. The sticks themselves are comfortable enough, but for some reason these beds are made so that each end bends sharply upward and however you lie on it the effect is worse than being in a badly slung hammock. Some Pygmies don't bother with a bed but just put the sticks on the ground and lie on them, or sleep on dry leaves. Tables are made

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

881 to emerge. Pumba knew that he was no match for a girl with such
832 patience and perseverance. He opened negotiations from the other side of the locked and bolted door.

Akidinimba was in no hurry, so she carefully examined the door and the single window, to see if there was any chance of breaking in. But the door was stout, and the window was tightly closed by a wooden shutter. So she decided, with some statesmanship, to negotiate. In return for a promise that Pumba would be allowed to emerge free of any danger of further attack, and free of any other obligations, she extracted a reluctant promise that he would attend the final stages of the elima back at Camp Putnam. A very downcast Pumba emerged and immediately started complaining that there had really been no need to beat him quite so hard. The girls asked him where
881 the other Pygmies were, and he pointed across the plantation to the
832 far side, where the forest stood out darkly into the blue sky. The
574 girls told him to stay behind, and not to try and warn his friends. They then set off, this time with Kidaya to the fore, picking their way across the tangle of fallen trees slowly and silently.

On the far side we entered the forest and continued southward for a short while. Kidaya, plotting her strategy like a general, sent out a couple of scouts. As a result of their report, we veered around to one side until we came to a slight rise. From the top of this we looked down through the trees across a leafy floor, completely bare of any undergrowth except for a few ferns. Below us lay a typically picturesque Pygmy camp, shimmering in the haze of smoke from
[361] innumerable fires. It was built in two circles, joining each other as if
[517] in an attempt to become one. We could hear the idle chatter of men and women as they lay on their beds or on their hunting nets, dozing
[231] in the midday warmth. A dog wandered lazily from hut to hut, sniffing hungrily, confident that his masters were far too sleepy to bother him. The sun, directly overhead, came down through the trees in irregular, jagged shafts, so that parts of the camp were bright,

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

sobbed her heart out—probably for the first time in her wonderful, hard-bitten old life.

The days that followed were full of happiness for everyone. Once Lizabeti got over her fright I made her practice regularly, to give her more strength in her good leg. She was soon able to stand up by herself, using the crutches for a lever. Not once did she fall. And the other children cut themselves crutches so that they could join in the fun, and together they found a new world of delight. When I was not coaxing Lizabeti to use her crutches more and more, someone else was, for everyone was anxious to see her fly over the ground just like Kenge, who by now was a master acrobat on his crutches, from which he refused to be parted.

In other respects, however, the camp became less pleasant, at any rate for me. The bees began to come in droves after their stolen honey. All day long they buzzed angrily around, so that we kept smoky fires in our huts night and day.

Almost every hour someone returned from a secret forage, with leaf bundles tied to his belt, dripping the sticky liquid down his legs. Sometimes it was too liquefied to be eaten, and then the whole bundle was simply dipped into a bowl of clear forest water, making a sweet-tasting drink. But far more popular was the whole comb which could be eaten grubs, larvae, bees and all. If it was very hard, it was first softened over the fire, and this made the grubs squirm more actively so that the honey worked its own way down your throat. It was, however, the best-tasting honey of all, despite the insects.

Apuma was yet another kind of honey, which came later in the season. It was full of grubs too, but they were all dead, and the honey had fermented. It was made by a different kind of bee and tasted like a bitter liqueur; if eaten in any quantity it could be highly intoxicating. But the Pygmy needs no stimulant in the honey season. He is drunk with the forest, with its beauty and abundance, and with the love it showers on its people. Every night that tiny

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

222 527 517 [533] camp resounded to songs of joy and praise, accompanied by the ringing of the ngbengbe sticks as they were clapped together in complex cross rhythms by boys and girls alike. Every night Masisi told his group, which had steadily grown ever since the beginning, stories about the past. And every night we went to bed content, knowing [825] that the morrow would be even better; for each day we discovered fresh growths of mushrooms, trees full of different kinds of nuts, and each night the chameleon gave its long, sad cry, to tell us that on the morrow we would have more honey.

222 535 517 One night in particular will always live for me, because that night I think I learned just how far away we civilized human beings have drifted from reality. The moon was full, so the dancing had gone on for longer than usual. Just before going to sleep I was standing outside my hut when I heard a curious noise from the nearby children's bopi. This surprised me, because at nighttime the Pygmies generally never set foot outside the main camp. I wandered over to see what it was.

[301] There, in the tiny clearing, splashed with silver, was the sophisticated Kenge, clad in bark cloth, adorned with leaves, with a flower stuck in his hair. He was all alone, dancing around and singing softly to himself as he gazed up at the treetops.

Now Kenge was the biggest flirt for miles, so, after watching a while, I came into the clearing and asked, jokingly, why he was dancing alone. He stopped, turned slowly around and looked at me as though I was the biggest fool he had ever seen; and he was plainly surprised by my stupidity.

[778] [821] "But I'm *not* dancing alone," he said. "I am dancing with the forest, dancing with the moon." Then, with the utmost unconcern, he ignored me and continued his dance of love and life.

621 578 609 224 As the weeks went by, however, a note of dissatisfaction stirred in the camp. Masisi began to complain that the others, including Manyalibo, were way off to the north getting meat, yet they had

521 than the Negroes, who are, in turn,
157 more talkative than whites. In this
571 regard—amount of interaction expressed in speech—the pygmies are
517 about on a level with white men. There
521 is little chance for extensive conversa-
571 tions during the daytime while out hunting, and hence the talking time is during the evening, when they have come home and are sitting in front of their huts, provided that they are not dancing.

At this talking time, each family sits around the entrance of its hut, using short butts of logs as seats. Dusk falls. They talk to each other across the circle, from hut to hut. Everyone can hear everyone else, so it is group interaction, even when one person is addressing one other specifically.

Their subjects of conversation are simple; they discuss what they have been doing that day, and in some cases they talk a little about what they plan to do tomorrow. Every now and then someone makes a joke about how a certain man was clumsy at handling his net during the day's hunt. Some
[157] people are quiet, others are noisier. Some men are clowns, habitually cracking jokes at the expense of others.

After bed time comes and the various families crawl into their huts to sleep, they get little uninterrupted rest, as they will keep chattering well into the night. Many of them will get up in the night, make water and have a smoke, and chat with others doing the same. There is almost always someone up, someone talking.

517 **Dancing.**—The pygmies will dance
535 almost any night when the weather is clear, and if there is a full moon they will dance most of the night. Sometimes they stamp on the ground, or on a hollow log, but when they can beg or borrow a drum from the Negroes, they will beat on that.

[P. 334-A]